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corrections and additions will prove of value to the student of natural history as well as increase the interest in the phenomenon of hibernation.

ALLEN CLEGHORN

#### DRAFTS AND COLDS

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Does it often happen that a writer opposes his own claims so neatly and conclusively as in "Drafts and Colds" in your issue of the 22d?

Those who read about the 16-inch fan will think of the generous third that rests upon a feather or other mattress and is correspondingly warmed while two thirds is fan-swept.

How could a more complete "disturbance of the thermo-neural equilibrium of the surface of the body" be secured and maintained?

(Other inventors prefer the cool blast from an exactly opposite direction.)

H. F. DUNHAM

September 26

#### "WASHINGTON SCIENCE"

THE communication in SCIENCE of September 29, with the above title, signed "Washingtonian," has doubtless been read with interest by many scientific men in this city and elsewhere. However, the article contains no mention of one feature in government work which in the mind of the present writer constitutes an obstacle to scientific work and a serious defect in the plans of more than one branch of the service. This is the placing and assumption of too much executive responsibility in scientific bureaus in the hands of unscientific subordinates to the chief.

The justification for "red tape" given by "Washingtonian" should have been applied to "system." In this sense the arguments can not be successfully controverted nor is there much more necessity for system in government work than exists in many universities or business houses. The head of a scientific bureau or department, however, has no desire to give routine matters his personal attention and wisely delegates the keeping of records and accounts to a chief clerk or executive assistant known by some other title. It is, however, too often true that these subordinates

overstep their original authority and gradually assume more. They may and often do become autocrats in their respective departments or bureaus. "System" then rapidly becomes "red tape." We then have the spectacle of a man without scientific training or experience dictating to the scientific corps how they shall conduct themselves.

Scientific work in an atmosphere such as this is aggravating and, while many of the annoying circumstances are too small to carry to the bureau or department head, as a whole they constitute an objection to scientific work in government service sufficient to have driven more than one good man away. A university may employ a purchasing agent or bursar, but it would, I trust, be difficult to find cases in which a department head receives practically all of his orders from such employees. In Washington it is not so difficult to find such cases. The fault has its origin in the executive's distaste for the details of system, but too often involves the whole corps in the maze of regulations made by men who have nothing else to do and who hunger and thirst for authority. In view of these actually existing conditions the writer may perhaps be excused from openly currying disfavor with the real powers by signing himself merely

ANOTHER WASHINGTONIAN

#### CHANGES IN THE PERSONNEL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

THE members of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature have unanimously invited Professor K. Kraepelin, Direktor des Naturhistorischen Museums, Steinhorwall Hamburg, Germany, to serve on the commission until the next International Congress, in the place of Professor Maehrenthal, deceased; also Dr. P. Chalmers Mitchell, secretary Zoological Society of London, Regent's Park, London, N. W., in the place of Dr. Boulenger, resigned.

CH. WARDELL STILES,  
*Secretary*

October 10, 1911